



February 21, 2012

Dear Committee Members:

On behalf of Northern Michigan University, I would like to express our opposition to the amendment being proposed to HB5342. Northern has built and shares a 4G WiMAX broadband network that it deployed in collaboration with Intel Corporation to expand off-campus access to the University's network, adjoining K-12 school networks and surrounding city and township networks, which consolidate costs and services, and enhances public safety in the Marquette area. The Northern 4G WiMAX network is one of the largest non-commercial WiMAX networks in the country and is nationally recognized as a network that could be used as a model for other rural communities.

The WiMAX network was built collaboratively on existing city, township, K-12, and university-owned towers and infrastructure that has allowed Northern to provide its 6,000 plus commuter students with a cost-effective, high-density broadband network over a wide geographic area, assisting pre-service teachers at K-12 schools to create virtual laboratories in the field, and gives students the ability to receive bandwidth intensive multi-media course content at anyplace, anytime in the Marquette, Negaunee, Ishpeming, Gwinn, or Big Bay areas for new field-study options and off-campus project-based learning.

We believe that we should work together with the State to allow all state universities, K-12, and local governmental entities to utilize state assets (the State Police Towers) to increase shared services, collaboration, and knowledge among all public entities that are essential to improving services to all students and the local communities and helping all to control costs. This is even more important in the underserved rural areas of the state where resources are limited, like the Upper Peninsula.

Through this network, we are currently providing K-12 educational services the ability to bring additional resources into the classroom at an affordable cost, offering place-bound students the opportunity to remain current with course work and curriculum, allowing teachers, administrators, and school board members to receive professional development without expensive travel costs, and permitting schools the opportunity to move learning outside of the classroom.

We have connected cities and local governments through this network allowing them to consolidate their network infrastructure (reducing the need for expensive technology overbuilds which saves taxpayer dollars), allowing cities and local government to extend

February 21, 2012

Page 2

existing networks and develop new efficiencies for utilities and emergency services, assisting communities in meeting new State guidelines designed to promote collaboration and efficient use of resources, and allowing for monitoring of the public infrastructure using cameras and other specialized equipment.

In summary, the University has worked to receive licensed spectrum from the FCC to control and ensure proper access to the network and provide the University, K-12s, and surrounding local governments with enhanced and shared services that benefit the entire community, which is imperative in underserved rural areas of the state where resources are limited.

I appreciate your support in rejecting the proposed amendment to HB5342, as it will eliminate our ability to expand the licensed WiMAX services that we are currently providing to our students, K-12s, and surrounding rural local and city governments, along with eliminating any future services that could be provided by other state universities, K-12s, and local governments.

Sincerely,

R. Gavin Leach

Vice President for Finance and Administration and Treasurer of the Board

/can

cc: Dr. Leslie E. Wong, President, Northern Michigan University
Mr. David S. Haynes, Special Assistant to the President, Northern Michigan University